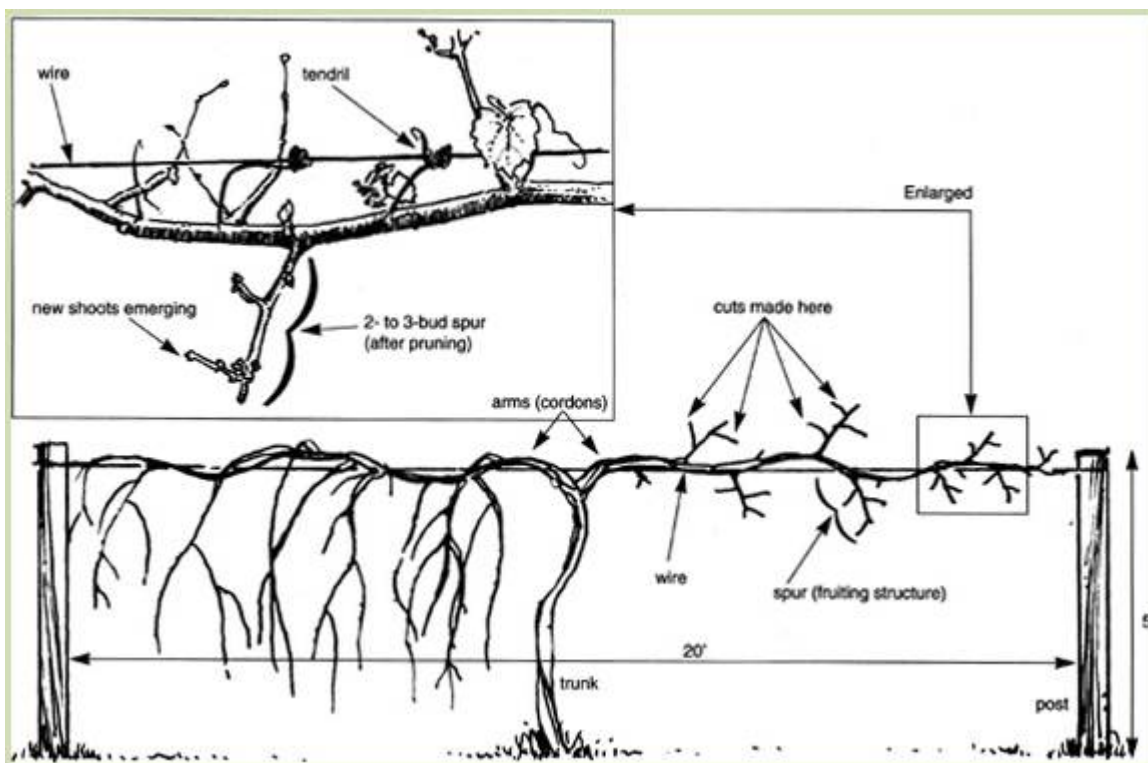


Winter Pruning For Muscadines

The ideal time to prune is mid to late February. An un-pruned vine can withstand severe cold temperatures better than a newly pruned vine. You may see them drip a liquid substance but this will not hurt the vine. We have 40 acres of muscadines in production and we will not prune them until late February.

- Thin out dead, diseased, and interfering wood.
- Remove all canes from the trunk except the permanent arms or those canes needed to replace damaged or dead arms.
- Cut back all of the previous year's growth, which is light brown, to two to four buds.



Pruning Fruit Trees

Fruit trees should be pruned to improve the quality of the fruits, to reduce the size of the tree so fruits are easy to harvest, and to develop a strong tree framework that can support heavy crops without breakage.

The best time to prune fruit trees is in late winter or early spring (March and April) just before growth begins. Early winter pruning can cause low temperature injury (winter injury). Late summer (late July and early August) pruning is good to restrict growth and to remove water sprouts, and diseased or damaged wood. During summer wounds heal faster, and the cuts won't stimulate so much new growth. Don't prune after mid-August because it can cause winter injury.

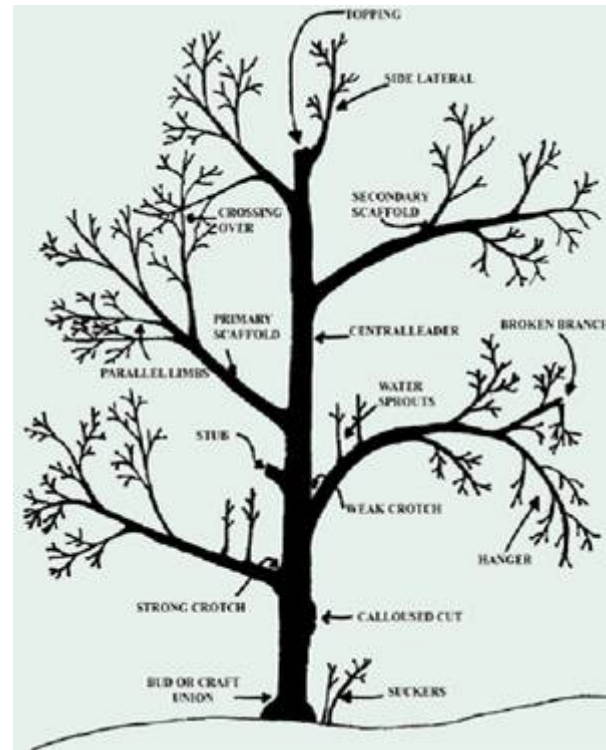
The goal of pruning is to keep the tree open and of a manageable size, so that there is enough air movement in the tree to prevent diseases and to make sure all leaves get sufficient light. This way the tree will be able to produce high quality fruits. However be careful not to remove too many branches, as pruning stimulates new growth but not fruit production.

General Rules for Pruning Fruit Trees

The primary aim of pruning is to remove weak and unproductive branches.

Remove:

- Branches that are weak or downward growing
- Long shoots in the center and top of the tree
- Water sprouts (one may be left to fill in an open area)
- Limbs that cross or otherwise interfere with others
- Root suckers
- Dense and crowded branches
- Dead, diseased, or damaged wood
- Limbs growing towards the center of the tree



Fall Vineyard Maintenance

It's time to remove any fruit left on the muscadine vines

Removal of fruit.



Any fruit left hanging on the vine that was not harvested should be removed. If left on the vine the fruit will rot or mummify (become raisin like) on the vine. This rotting fruit can lead to a build up of disease over the winter and will be present in the spring. If you do not remove the fruit you will have much more disease pressure such as ripe rot or macrophema rot that can affect next years harvest.

Many vines will also have what are called "shot berries", these are grapes that get about as big as a dime and are green and will not ripen on the vine. They are the product of the vine either trying

to set a second crop or late blooms being pollinated but do not have enough time allowed for the ripening of the fruit. Any green or shot berries should also be removed this time of year.



Do not prune too early. For years we pruned our vines beginning after the Thanksgiving Holiday. But through trial, error and experience we have found the best time to prune muscadine vines is from mid January to mid March. We have found that a vine that has not been pruned can handle colder temperatures or big swing in temperatures better than a vine that has been pruned. In general we experience our coldest temperatures from late December-January, by pruning later we are giving our plants a better chance of coming through the winter with little or no cold weather damage.

If you are used Blue-X plant shelters this year and your vines have reached the top wire, now is the ideal time to remove the shelters.

On a planting report we have a beautiful crop of muscadine vines this year, so if you are thinking about adding a few vines or considering planting some acreage now is a good time to begin getting your orders in. I hope these tips will ensure that you have an abundant crop next season

